

TALON

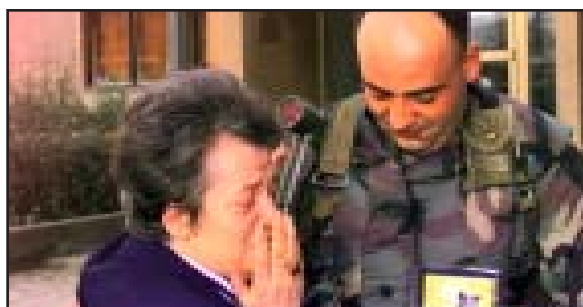
A firefighter in a yellow jacket and helmet, holding a hose with a large burst of water, set against a blue sky with clouds.

Inside

- Fighting fires in Bosnia
- Guarding "Gotham City"
- Red Cross raises morale



Interpreters span gap.... 5
Speaking to the people



Mother and child reunion..... 9
Meeting after six years



Morale boosting 11
Red Cross brings hope

Contents

UpFront

Up Front	2
Staying alert	
Making the connection	3
13th Signal helps soldiers reach home	
New dining facility almost complete.....	4
Eagle Base gets new chow hall	
New bridge connects towns	6-7
Russians and Americans working together	
Turning up the heat.....	8
Firefighting, Bosnian style	
"Stick" it to 'em.....	10
Combat lifesaver training at Dobol	
Guarding "Gotham City"	12
Patrolling Luckavac railhead	

On the Cover

Specialist Logan W. Griffith, of Desoto, Mo., a Reserve firefighter with 376th Engineer Det. Firefighters, hoses down his target while conducting a mission readiness training exercise in case of a fire. (Photo by Private Louis Sardinha. See page 8.)

"We have a thousand reasons for failure but not a single excuse." — Rudyard Kipling

The Task Force Eagle Web site is located at www.tfeagle.army.mil

The Task Force Eagle web site offers breaking news and photos on its web site. The web site provides information concerning the Turk, Russian, and NORDPOL Brigade assigned to Task Force Eagle, as well as U.S. soldiers stationed in Bosnia.

By Command Sergeant Major Paul M. Inman
Multinational Division (N) CSM

As your incoming Multinational Division (North) and 1st Cavalry Division Command Sergeant Major, I'd like to introduce myself to the soldiers in Bosnia. I'm not a newcomer to the 1st Cavalry Division; I bring over 26 years of experience with me and I've been with 1st Cavalry Division for the last two and a half years. I'm looking forward to working with all of the soldiers here and at Fort Hood. I want you to take advantage of my experience and let me help you succeed while we are here.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Command Sergeant Major Dwight Brown for an outstanding transition of authority. The process was very professionally done and I couldn't have asked for a better right seat ride. His willingness to set SFOR 4 up for success was readily apparent during our time together.

My expectations of soldiers here are the same high standards of the 1st Cavalry Division. I expect the Noncommissioned Officers to be the standard setters. All soldiers expect the Noncommissioned Officers to provide them quality guidance, we will meet their expectations. Bosnia is a busy place and the days seem to run together, so the Noncommissioned Officers will need to be constantly vigilant in enforcing standards.

I expect all Noncommissioned Officers to live by the Noncommissioned Officer's Creed and follow its' guidelines. Every soldier will wear his or her uniforms correctly; AR 6701, fasten their chin strap and flak vest, account for their sensitive items at all times and maintain their military bearing and professionalism.

SALUTING is one of the Army's oldest traditions. When saluting, I expect to hear soldiers sounding off with "First Team" or their unit motto. Together we will start this mission with high standards and work to successfully accomplish our mission.

I can not overly stress to each of you the importance of always being alert to what is going on around you. Nothing we do is more important than our safety and Force Protection. Treat everyday as if it is your first day in Bosnia. Our number one priority is **"Force Protection."** **Don't become complacent, Stay Safe.**



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Making the communication connection

Story and photo by Sergeant Derrick Witherspoon
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

The 13th Signal Battalion from Fort Hood, Texas, is working day and night to help soldiers reach out and touch the ones they love, and they said they won't stop until every service member is able to communicate effectively with their friends and family.

The 13th Signal Battalion recently deployed to Bosnia in support of Operation Joint Forge. They will be stationed at various camps here for a year, helping to make communication for service members deployed to the area simple and efficient.

Lieutenant Colonel Alan R. Lynn of Melbourne, Fla., 13th Signal Battalion commander, said their main mission here is to provide tactical communications to each camp in the area. "We're basically the point of contact for all communications in this area," Lynn said. "If Sprint's not working, we're the ones everyone's calling."

Lynn said communications is limited at certain camps, but the 13th Signal plans to make communicating throughout Multinational Division (North) as easy as picking up a phone and dialing. "A lot of soldiers don't have access to a telephone so we want to make sure when they do get to one it works, and it works well," Lynn said.

Soldiers of 13th Signal want to make the communication setup here as commercial as possible.

Since Sprint lines are up and ready to go, 13th Signal plans to make communicating here as easy as it is in the United States.

"Although the service provided before was good, we plan to provide an even better service," Lynn said. "We're like the AT&T of MSE (Multiple Subscriber Equipment) lines."

Staff Sergeant William L. Pitre of Orange, Texas, non-commissioned officer in charge of Company C, 13th Signal Battalion, said the telephone lines at Bedrock have been here since the building of the camp.

"The wires that are up now are old and worn out because of the weather," Pitre said. "We plan to get rid of the old lines and use a one line system which will help keep the clutter down. The new wire can handle the weather much better and will also help make connecting to the Internet much faster and easier."

Getting the Internet up and running successfully is a priority. This process will involve upgrading the e-mail system here.

"We want to get the Internet working at each camp so servicemembers will be able to receive official e-mail, and e-mail from home," Lynn said. "There are a lot of people who would like to e-mail their sons, daughters, wives and other family members to let them know how things are going. We plan to make this possible because we know it can be done and we can do it."

Captain Bruce O. Daniel of Bossier City, La., commander of Company C, 13th Signal Battalion, said they plan to provide subscribers with not only voice connections, but Internet connections also. "We plan to use a new tactical network which will help accessing the Internet much faster," Daniel said. "We don't use modems here, so we pipe everything through the lines, and my soldiers make sure everything continues to run good."

Daniel said the Net Encryption System would be the major key in



Staff Sergeant William L. Pitre of Orange, Texas, pulls down worn out wire and prepares to install new wire.

making this procedure work. "The NES is an upgrade that will increase the speed someone can connect to the Net," Daniel said. He added that this was the first time a network of this kind has been brought into this country. Daniel said it would greatly improve the number of people who have access to the Internet at one time.

The 13th Signal has an abundance of soldiers throughout MND (N) to support the mission. "Basically what we are doing is bringing an enhancement to the MSE network that already exists and maintaining it. My soldiers are equipped and excited about performing the missions ahead of us," Daniel said.

Lynn said he wants everything to be set up good and stay well maintained, so when he passes it on to the 10th Mountain Division, the lines of communication will already be well established.

After watching the 13th Signal work to make communications better at Bedrock, it would be hard to deny that the unit is showing MND (N) that good communication is a key to mission success.

New dining facility to open soon



Zudin Hadzic, a carpenter with Brown and Root, builds foundation support blocks for the new dining facility at Eagle Base.

Story by Sergeant First Class Donald R. Dunn II
 Photos by Specialist Robert B. Valentine
 319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

A ribbon cutting ceremony will celebrate the grand opening of a new dining facility at Eagle Base Oct. 23. The new facility features a unique design concept and can accommodate several hundred soldiers at a time.

"We started this project on the 1st of September, and now we are just about to finish it," Steve D. Anderson, a carpenter for Brown and Root, and a resident of Marietta, Ga. said. "This mess hall will also have outdoor eating facilities and will be able to comfortably feed between 850 to 1,000 soldiers at a time."

"This project is being completed by over 100 Brown and Root employees ranging from electricians to carpenters just to name a few. We completed this project in 36 days and that ain't bad," Anderson said.

"We just completed the new dining facility at Comanche Base and this one is a little smaller than that one ... I'm

proud of the job my men have done here in a short period of time," Anderson said.

A linguist for Brown and Root, Jahic Muamer, a Tuzla resident said, "I like the progress the American soldiers have made since they have been here, and also the employment opportunities we have to work for them. Jobs are hard to find in Tuzla and the best place to work is Eagle Base."

"I'm glad we finally have a mess hall near us, and I know the folks at Tent City 3 are too. Now we can just walk across the street and get our meals," Specialist Melissa J. Hoage, a registry clerk for the 329th Postal Company and a resident of Menomonie Wis., said.

"There will probably be more business here at the Post Office. When the weather turns bad it will be a comforting thought to know we will not have to walk 20 minutes to the other dining facility to bring back food for those of us who cannot leave the area," Hoage said.

Specialist Carlos R. Gillyard, a postal clerk with the 15th Postal Company, and a resident of Florence, Ala., said he can't wait until the new dining facility opens. "I know it will cut back on my lunch hour, but that's better than walking over a mile and back for a meal."

Standing at the Tuzla Airfield gate, less than 100 yards from the new dining facility, was Airman Jason A. Hall, a member of the United States Air Force Security Police and 401st Expeditionary Air Base Group. "It's nice and it's close. This will be especially good for our aviators and those of us working on the flight line here," Hall said.

The new dining facility will benefit all the soldiers who work or live at the east end of Eagle Base, and is an additional step to improving the way of life for the soldiers stationed here.



Cosic Mujaga and Hamdija Mrdzic, electricians with Brown and Root, set up a circuit breaker.

Interpreters play important role

Story and photo by Staff Sergeant
Pat Johnston
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Almost 300 civilian interpreters are working, on a contract basis, for U.S. forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina, according to Sinaja Mravak of Virginia, TRW area supervisor for Camp Bedrock and Comanche Base.

The interpreters hired by TRW come from all parts of the former Yugoslavia. The employees range in age from their late teens to their late 50s. Their occupations before the war included teaching, engineering and many more. Some interpreters were graduate and medical school students.

It's not easy to get an interpreter job with the Stabilization Force in Bosnia. TRW is very careful about choosing from a wide variety of applicants. "When the Army decides that we need to increase the numbers (of interpreters), we'll put an ad in the papers and the word gets around and they'll come, say 15-20 at a time," Mravak said. "We'll screen them, do the medical on them and then we'll keep them on file till we need them."

An interpreter at Bedrock, Bosko Urosevic of Tuzla, said that of the 1,500 people that have applied, only 300 had their names put on file for possible employment.

Baric Jelica, also from Tuzla, has been working at Bedrock for a year. She said that only 12 of the 120 applicants with whom she applied have been hired. She waited two years after getting on TRW's list before she was hired.

The work is not easy, but with unemployment at 80 percent in Bosnia, there are few options.

For Bosnia, the pay is good. TRW supplies interpreters uniforms, flak vests and kevlar helmets. At Bedrock, the company provides transportation for most of the interpreters who live in the local towns.

However, the money is hard earned. Duty hours are long (as long as the mission requires, including rotating night shifts). The flak vest and helmet are uncomfortable to the unaccustomed. It's often hot and dusty, muddy or very cold. Food in the field is the soldier's standby: Meals Ready to Eat and water. There are tense and dangerous situations while out on convoy. In other words, interpreters must hash it out in a soldier's world.

Yet the interpreters are not soldiers. "We're something in between the army and civilians around here," Ivana Djordjevic of Belgrade, who's been an interpreter for two and a half years, said.

Missions assigned to interpreters include every kind of mission at Bedrock. "I went out with PSYOPS, Civil Affairs, tankers, engineers, infantry, colonels, brigade commanders, battalion commanders, translated radio shows and meetings and Seebees too," Djordjevic said.



Masic Eldin (Zivinice), interpreter (middle), helps Lieutenant Colonel Rogers (left), Camp Bedrock Civil Affairs officer in charge, collect information during visits to several villages and farms west of Bonovici.

There are particular situations where an interpreter's skill goes beyond their ability to translate languages. "When we conduct the weapon's storage site inspections, it's always very important that we have not only interpreters that are very good with the language, but interpreters we know can handle themselves in a situation like that," McKiernan said. "Been doing it for a long time, and several of the ones that we have are left over from the IFOR (Implementation Force) days, so they know how to deal with the Entity Arm Faction's commanders and EAF units better than some of the new ones."

Thode said that their interpreters must also be able to handle children, because children in the villages mob their teams, and they need a friendly, but loud and articulate interpreter to talk to the children.

Djordjevic said interpreters also provide continuity and a historical perspective to events here in Bosnia during unit transitions. "Sometimes they ask us about events. We were here when some things were happening ... when troops first arrived here starting from the mud that was up to your knees and eating MRE's for the first three months. It was bad, but it was getting better everyday," Djordjevic said.

"I got to meet 37 very nice people and I got to learn quite a bit about this country from them. I learned their perspective on what happened during the war, and what they think of the U.S. and forces who came before us and how grateful they are for our presence," McKiernan said.

Bridging the gap, Americans, Russians,

Story by Staff Sergeant Pat Johnston
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Dense fog shrouded three HMMWVs as they made their way through villages and countryside an hour and a half northeast of Camp Bedrock. The route was familiar to these soldiers, who had been making this trip for the past seven weeks; but this morning there was a feeling of expectation as they drove the last few miles.

They came around a curve and were suddenly surprised to see a Russian military band standing along the roadside. Television reporters scurried in and out of the multi-hued camouflage crowd. The bridge -- their bridge -- was covered with soldiers from Russia, U.S. civilians in suits waited around a microphone to the right of a table upon which Russian soldiers were laying a white cloth and placing refreshments.

The soldiers, who had helped to build the bridge, looked at the scene with amazement. Backing their HMMWVs into the black mud along the road, they got out and walked up the road towards the crowd.

The ceremony to dedicate the Priboj Bridge was unexpectedly grand. It was a fitting sendoff for the soldiers of the 1st Squad, 2nd Platoon of the 40th Engineer Battalion, 1st Armored Division, who would redeploy back to Baumholder, Germany the next day.

This bridge is the first Russian and U.S. military and civil-

ian construction project in Bosnia-Herzegovina, according to Colonel Paul D. Eaton, the assistant division commander of the 1st Armored Division, and paves the way for future joint operations for the 1st Cavalry Division.

The 55-foot timber-trestle bridge, with its steel stringers, is significant in another way. It joins two cities; Teocak, which is located on the Federation side of divided Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Lopare, which is in the Republic of Srpska.

Mr. Muminovic, Mayor of Teocak, said the bridge was very important for Teocak citizens. He thanked the mayor of Lopare for allowing the bridge to be built in their territory, and said that the bridge would stand as a visible reminder to all citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a link between their two cities.

Mr. Vukovic, mayor of Lopare, thanked the Stabilization Force representatives from Russia and the United States for this bridge "which would connect people from the Federation with people from the Republic of Srpska for a better future and for making Bosnia safer," he said.

Construction of the bridge was a combined effort. The materials were supplied by the cities. Local welders and carpenters contributed their skills to the bridge they would be using daily, while foreign military engineers from two former cold war countries worked side by side to complete the project.

Several speakers said that the joint work of the Russians and Americans was an example of how to achieve peace in Bosnia.

Mayor Muminovic told the crowd that not only was the bridge



Photos by Specialist Michelle Labriel, 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera)

A Russian soldier lowers a crane to tear down the Priboj Bridge.

Bosnians finish the Priboj Bridge

linking two cities from former warring sectors, but it was also built by two formerly opposing nations.

Russian and American soldiers provided design, transportation and construction support throughout the project. "We both needed each other," First Lieutenant Eric Marcellus, 2nd platoon leader from Spokane, Wash. said.

Russian soldiers blew up the original bridge after 40th Engineers cut through the metal stringers that once supported the structure. The soldiers watched together as the carefully placed explosives were detonated, causing the bridge to rise off its footings and fall into the water below. It was a Russian crane that pulled the ruined bridge from the stream and lifted the steel I-beams from U. S. Army trucks to their resting place on concrete abutments constructed by 40th Engineer soldiers.

Local civilian welders joined the stringers together to form the foundation of the new bridge. The welding took a week and a half. The biggest problem was weather, according to Sergeant Bobby R. Maphies, acting platoon sergeant for the 40th Engineers from Leighton, Utah. "If it was raining, you couldn't do it because we were using arc welders," Maphies explained.

The 1st Cavalry, 20th Engineer Battalion, Company C, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Platoons did decking work on the Priboj Bridge, as their mission overlapped with the redeploying 40th Engineer's mission.

The bridge design was drafted by the American Army engineers and modified slightly by the Russian engineers. It's a strong bridge said Marcellus. There are two spans, one 35 feet, the other 20 feet. The military load class is 70 for one span and 120 for the other. The M-1 Abrams tank is class 70, Marcellus said. That's the heaviest



Russian and American soldiers lower wooden stringers into place on the Priboj Bridge.

kind of vehicle that can use the bridge.

With the speeches in Russian, English and Bosnian concluded, the ribbon was cut by Russian and American military and civilian officials. Moments later, military trucks rolled down the hill and over the Priboj Bridge as part of the ceremony.

Following the celebration, 40th Battalion soldiers took a few more pictures of the soldiers who built the Priboj Bridge. The pictures included a plethora of different uniforms and patches.

Then they drove their HMMWVs up to the Russian Brigade compound to pay a last farewell visit to their comrades in construction.

After leaving the Russian compound by a back road and circling around down a hill, they crossed the Priboj Bridge — slowly rolling over the bridge they had built.

"I think the best thing about it was working with the Russians," said Private First Class Michael Craig Pullbrook from Los Angeles. "Working with the Russians was something I never thought I was going to do," he said with a wide smile.

Private Sedrick Anthony Player from Dallas/Fort Worth, who had stood innumerable hours guarding the bridge for the 40th Engineers while it was constructed, said, "It was something to put up that would be left there. It shows that we were here and contributing to this peace keeping mission."



The first vehicles roll over the Priboj Bridge after the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Trained and ready firefighters



Specialist Logan W. Griffith of Desoto, Mo., a reserve firefighter with the 376th Engineer Det. Firefighters, drags out a fire hose while conducting a mission readiness training exercise in case of fire.

Story and photo by Private Louis Sardinha
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Smoke barrels through the air as an orange blaze roars, and sirens scream as fire trucks rush to extinguish hungry flames. A yellow truck screeches to a halt in front of the fire. Soldiers clad in full protective gear jump out of the truck and immediately attack their nemesis.

These soldiers are with the 463rd Engineer Detachment Firefighters (FF) out of Houston, Texas.

"We're the first fire department at Camp McGovern, which makes us feel good because we can make a difference in a safe way," Specialist Shawn D. Schoppe, of Porter, Texas, assistant crew chief with 463rd Engineer Det. FF, said.

The 463rd is here to provide a safe environment for Camp McGovern and educate the soldiers on fire safety, said Private

First Class Kirk M. Jackson, of St. Louis, Mo., an Army Reserve firefighter with the 376th Engineer Detachment FF out of Granite City, Ill., here in support of the 463rd.

"We'll be doing inspections to make sure the basic fire safety on the base is adequate," Specialist Melvin R. Mixon Jr., of New Caney, Texas, also a Reserve firefighter with 463rd Eng. Det. said.

"We want to emphasize fire prevention ... we are beginning to implement fire drills, evacuations, assemblies and inspections," Sergeant Iris R. Rodriguez, of Houston, Texas, the fire chief for the 463rd Eng. Det. FF, said.

McGovern firefighters are quick to react to emergencies. "When the firefighters' hotline rings in their tent we hightail it to our trucks," Jackson said.

When a call is received, the firefighters have one minute to be on their fire truck and in their bunker or firefighting gear, according to Jackson. "We have three minutes total to be at the fire," Jackson continued.

When the firefighters initially arrive at the scene of a burning structure, they conduct fire suppression, according to Jackson. If they can fight their way inside, they search for potential victims.

To aid their firefighting, they have two sets of fire gear, Rodriguez said. They have structural fire fighting gear, which protects against any type of building structure, forest or vehicle fire. They also have what are called "silvers," which are uniforms designed to reflect very high temperatures in situations like aircraft fires.

Along with this gear, they also have two fire trucks. They have a primary fire truck that is the first attack line to any structure, vehicle or emergency that would happen, Rodriguez said. "The second one

could be used as a water supply with an additional 660 gallons of water."

According to Mixon, the first thing anyone should do in case of a fire is take the nearest fire extinguisher and try to put out the flames. Meanwhile, someone else should run and notify others so people can get to safety.

Fire prevention is their main objective. "Pretty soon we'll be starting fire safety classes and fire extinguisher classes here," Mixon said.

Being the first firefighting unit at McGovern leaves them with a lot of work, but they say they're more than up to the challenge. "I think that we can do a lot of good on the base camp with what we have to offer," Mixon said.

Even though fire fighting is their job, fire prevention is their goal. "If we have to put out a fire, then there's something wrong. We make sure this camp is safe for everyone," Schoppe said.

Tuzla native returns home as U.S. peacekeeper in Bosnia

Story and Photo by Specialist Bryan Cox
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Beyond all description and imagination." That's how Specialist Sasa Randjelovic describes his reunion with his mother in their Bosnian homeland after a six-year separation spanning thousands of miles — a separation filled with homesickness, frustration and worry.

Randjelovic, a field artillery meteorologist with Battery C, 121st Field Artillery Battalion at Camp McGovern, is a Tuzla native who fled to America during Bosnia's three and a half year civil war. He worked with the International Red Cross during the war, and left Bosnia with the Red Cross in 1994 after the fighting became too intense to stay. As an American soldier back in his home country helping to keep the peace, he's had the opportunity to reunite with his mother.

"My legs got weak and I wasn't sure if I'd be able to handle the experience," Randjelovic said. "It's just too powerful of an emotion."

Randjelovic tried to take his mother with him when he left for the United States, but she refused to leave her homeland behind. "She has lived here her whole life," he said. "There was no way I could talk her into leaving."

After arriving in America, Randjelovic settled in Tennessee for two years before enlisting in the Army in May of 1996. "I wanted to be an American citizen and stay in America," he said. "And being in the American Army helped me to do that."

Randjelovic spent his first year with the Army in Korea, and

was then assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas. When the division deployed to Bosnia last month, he had his chance to return home.

"It has changed so much. It looks like a completely different country than from before. There is so much destruction and rubble. I hope this never happens again," he said.

His return as a soldier let him support the peace he yearns for and also gave him the chance to reunite with his mother. "I wanted to make sure I got to see her while I was here ... it was all I could think about," he said. His unit at McGovern supported him by allowing him to travel to Tuzla to finally meet.

The reunion took place at the Stabilization Force's civil affairs office downtown. Seeing her son for the first time in years, Ms. Randjelovic could not contain her emotions.

"I'm so excited, I'm having trouble thinking straight," she said. "It's been pretty tough the past couple days waiting for this moment."

"I am very proud of him. I wish I had a photo to show around because of the (U.S.) flag on his right shoulder. I think it's great he is here to help with the American forces," she said.

Serving as an American soldier in his former country puts Randjelovic in a situation unique to most people, allowing him to serve firsthand as an SFOR peacekeeper in Bosnia.

"I'm proud to be here. Bosnia is too beautiful of a country to be wasted over fighting," he said. "So many people in Bosnia have lost family members. I am just happy we are both still here to see each other again."



Specialist Sasa Randjelovic, a 1st Cavalry soldier at Camp McGovern, and a Tuzla native, hugs his mother after reuniting from six years of separation caused by Bosnia's civil war.

"Sticking" it to them, combat lifesaver training hits Camp Dobol



Private First Class Caman C. Cox from the 410th Military Police Company, watches as Private Marshall M. Patterson, from Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, attempts to administer intravenous fluids.

Story and photo by Private First Class Giovanni Lorente
319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Combat medics have long been a key part of keeping soldiers healthy and ready for combat. Medics are like mechanics, they keep Army soldiers finely tuned as instruments of war.

There aren't always enough medics to go around, therefore, combat medics train non-medical soldiers life-saving procedures in case a trained medic is not available in an emergency situation. They train the soldiers in combat lifesaver techniques to certify them as combat lifesavers.

"So far we have provided Combat Lifesaver School training and Medical Evacuation training," said Sergeant Christopher Davis, a combat medic with the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment from Fort Hood, Texas.

Davis said combat lifesavers learn how to treat most types of wounds, how to splint fractures and how to evacuate casualties. With this training, the combat lifesaver can take care of injured personnel until additional help arrives. MEDEVAC training is tied in with combat lifesaver training,

and includes procedures on loading and unloading casualties onto different evacuation vehicles.

Combat lifesaver trainees practice their techniques on each other, including "sticking" fellow students with intravenous needles until the technique is mastered. Such hands-on training builds a soldier's confidence, ensuring they can handle real life situations.

Administering I.V. fluids is the least popular of the realistic exercises. The instructor's skills play an important role in this stage of the training. "I get the soldiers to relax and give them a break. I support them throughout the course," Davis said.

"Training the soldiers in these skills give us an extra advantage which we sometimes need. These soldiers will most likely be the first ones to reach a casualty and administer the first steps of first-aid that will be needed to save a casualty's life," Davis explained.

Having the skills to save a soldier's life comes with a lot of responsibility. Although taking this course is sometimes required, the skills soldiers learn are vastly appreciated.

Red Cross, there when you need them

Story and photo by Specialist Robert B. Valentine

319th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

The American Red Cross is "here when you need them and helping military families today." To members of the Red Cross, this is more than a slogan — these are the words they live by.

Staff members of the Red Cross help soldiers in a number of ways; they help plan events to raise morale, visit soldiers that are injured or ill, provide comfort items in times of need and relay important messages between soldiers and their families.

The Red Cross station here at Eagle Base, manned by a five-person staff, operates 24 hours a day to aid soldiers when needed. A two-person team operates the Red Cross station in Tazar, Hungary, 12 hours a day.

Darleen Sehorn, from Forest Grove, Ore., is the theater Red Cross team leader. "In order to work for the Red Cross, you must have concern for people and want to help others; 50 percent of our job is providing emergency communication between a soldier and his family," Sehorn said.

When the Red Cross receives an emergency message, a staff member immediately calls either that soldier's first sergeant or company commander. The Red Cross representative informs the proper authority that one of their soldiers has a message, and they share the message with that person, Sehorn explained. The soldier should first hear the message from his commander or first sergeant. The soldier then decides whether or not to request emergency leave.

"It works out better if the commander is there to inform the soldier of the news. That way the authority figure is already there to grant the soldier's emergency leave," Sehorn said. It is also very important for the commander or first sergeant to let the Red Cross know what the soldier intends to do about the situation, according to Sehorn. This allows the Red Cross to inform the family that the message has been delivered, and if the soldier is coming home.

The Red Cross also informs the family of a soldier who's been injured, taken ill or died.

"We let the family know the doctor's statement on the status of a patient, with that soldier's consent of course," Sehorn said. A staff member brings a care package to that soldier complete with stationary, a book, crossword puzzle and toiletries.

"We can also request a family member's medical condition for a soldier, when there is a pre-existing medical condition," she said.

The other half of the Red Cross mission is to ease the stress soldiers endure during a deployment. "We try to get out to the different base camps two or three times a week and bring treats that we have here at the station to other soldiers." At the Eagle Base Red Cross station there is a "canteen area" where soldiers can get a hot cup of coffee or cocoa, help themselves to candy and cookies, borrow a book or check out a movie — all for free.



John B. Mooers, the Embry Riddle Aeronautical University Center Director, receives some candy from Darleen Sehorn, the Red Cross team leader, at the Medical Evacuation tent before he departs for Germany.

"I enjoy working for the Red Cross because of the people. You get the opportunity to meet a variety of people from all walks of life. I get to help them and share in a part of their lives," Sehorn said. "The diversity of coworkers with different ages and from parts of the country make this job also great. Some of us are spouses of retired service members; others are retired from the Air Force, Army and Marines."

Carolyn Reves, a Red Cross staff member said, "This gives me the chance to give something back. I started out as a water-safety instructor at Anderson Air Base in Guam. Just by being around Red Cross people, in and out of the office, osmosis took over."

"I was drawn to what they do for soldiers and airmen. As a military wife, I understand that it can be hard for a soldier to talk to his family," the Jackson, Miss. native said.

There are about 200 Red Cross staff members stationed at military installations worldwide.

"We are a mobile staff. We have to go wherever we are told — just like the military."

Whenever your number comes up, you get deployed to a certain area," Sehorn said.

"Our team received several briefings about Bosnia while at Fort Benning. We all went through STX (situational training exercise) training to qualify for our deployment," she said.

"We have such great people doing this work. We all work together, whether it is getting on a convoy, carrying packages, boxing candy or talking to soldiers," Sehorn said.

The American Red Cross' purpose is to serve soldiers, especially those in foreign lands. When it comes to their important mission, they know that "help can't wait."

Railhead guards protect local civilians and ensure security of equipment

Story and photo by Private First Class
Phillip E. Breedlove Jr.
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Weapon in hand, a soldier walks alongside a train track. The night is especially dark and gloomy in this soldier dubbed "Gotham City," but he smiles up at the sky anyway. Several thousand tons of U.S. military equipment tower over him; a symbol of power like the famous "bat signal."

Camp McGovern's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, Scout Platoon was recently tasked to guard the Lukavac Railhead, known to U.S. forces as "Gotham City" because of its dark, industrial atmosphere, according to Specialist Michael S. Olson, a gunner with the Scout Platoon. The railhead was used by local Bosnian factories to ship manufactured products until it was abandoned during the Bosnian civil war. It is now used to transport U.S. military equipment to Bosnia.

Unfortunately, equipment on rails is more susceptible to theft and vandalism because it's exposed for longer periods of time, Olson continued. The military compensates for this by guarding their equipment.

"There's plenty of potential because there are a lot of people walking by. At any given time, we'll have (valuable) equipment, and somebody has to guard it," Olson said.

The most common problem, claimed Olson, isn't theft — it's vandalism. Vandals find it much easier to get in, damage and deface the equipment, and get out unnoticed than to try to steal the railhead's heavy equipment.

Another reason for guarding the site is to keep local civilians safe. With all the movement of heavy machinery and equipment, people could get hurt. It is the guards' responsibility to keep the civilians a safe distance from the dangerous areas.

The site has few conveniences because of its small size. A dining facility, tents for the soldiers to sleep in and guard shacks, service the mission.

According to Olson, the lack of conveniences isn't much of a problem for the soldiers because they are rotated out every few days. Spare time at the railhead is spent reading, listening to music and talking to fellow soldiers.

Olson said the experience is a wonderful opportunity; it gets soldiers out of the base camp and gives them the chance to meet the locals. Olson is happy he is making a contribution to the mission in Bosnia and helping to keep the locals safe.

